

## ***ABSENCE POLICY***

Ponderosa High School values the unique learning needs of each student. We work hard to provide an environment that is safe and where education is valued. We understand that there will be circumstances when students will not be able to attend school. When a student misses class, they miss opportunities to learn. Every school day matters! Research supports a direct correlation between student attendance and academic success. ***Colorado state law requires children between the ages of 6 and 17 to regularly attend school.*** In addition, PHS allows an open-campus for upperclassmen that adds an additional challenge to attendance monitoring and accountability. Please help us maximize student attendance and student accountability for absences by adhering to and supporting the following attendance policy:

**Absences should be called into the office by a parent no later than 10:00 AM on the day of the absence.**

- **Absences will be adjusted at the end of each school day to *unexcused*** if the reason for the absence has not been confirmed or does not align with the approved reasons acceptable to the principal, in accordance with District Policy JH and JHD.
- **Parents may retroactively excuse an unexcused absence up to 48 hours** after the absence by completing an absence adjustment form and providing supporting documentation. Unexcused absences will not be excused by administration after 48 hours.
- **Plagiarized calls or notes will result in an automatic Wednesday/Saturday detention or suspension.**
- **Every class matters!** Students will begin to receive consequences as early as the first *unexcused* class period. Consequences are progressive and include: after school detention, lunch detention, Saturday school, loss of before and/or after school privileges - including but not limited to dances, athletic and/or activity events.
- Timely attendance in class is essential for academic success. Consequently, **(4) unexcused tardies will be equal to (1) unexcused absence.**
- ***If the above fails to yield attendance numbers acceptable to the Douglas County School District and State of Colorado, truancy court may be assigned for both the parent(s)/guardian(s) and student(s).***

### **Excused Absences**

Excused absences are defined as those resulting from temporary or extended illnesses, injuries, or physical, mental, and/or emotional disabilities; family emergencies; absences due to early release excused by the school for extra and co-curricular activities; absences which occur when a student is in custody of a court or law enforcement authority; and any other absence approved by the principal. Absences that do not meet these criteria will be considered unexcused. Parents may not excuse students from class because they are not prepared or because they need to do work for another class. PHS may request that a doctor's note be provided. Students who are excused ***must leave*** the school and/or be off school grounds once they are called out of school. \*Absences due to school sponsored events will *not* be calculated into a student's total absences for a class, semester, or school year.

Students with excused absences are responsible for contacting their teachers to arrange make-up learning opportunities missed during their absence. Students are strongly encouraged to use teacher websites and email to obtain information regarding their missed work. Students should refer to each classroom teacher's policies for specific timelines for accepting missing/late work due to an excused absence.

### **Unexcused Absences**

Unexcused absences are those with or without prior knowledge and approval of parent(s)/guardian(s) or for reasons not acceptable as defined above as "excused absence."

Students with unexcused absences are responsible for the learning missed during their absence(s). Please make sure to be

familiar with each teacher's policy as it pertains to missing work due to an absence, excused or unexcused.

Student safety is a priority! PHS does not approve of "ditch days" in any form. All students absent during "ditch days" will be considered *unexcused* unless a doctor's note is presented to excuse the absence.

## **Attendance Reporting**

Appropriate, timely reporting of attendance helps us to maintain a safe environment for all students and staff by ensuring accurate student representation at all times during the school day. All student absences must be reported by the legal guardian of the student to the attendance office. *Students, even those over 18, are not allowed to call in and excuse an absence.*

## **Full Day Absence**

Please call the attendance office at 303-387-4002 by 10:00AM if your child will be excused for the entire day. Leave a message that includes: student's name, date, name of person calling, relationship to student and contact number. Please include a detailed reason for the absence to be approved by administration.

## **Early Dismissal or Late Arrival**

Parents: The preferred method to excuse a student that will be leaving early or arriving to school late is via a handwritten note.

The note must be written in ink and include:

- Student's name/date/time of absence
- If he or she will be returning to school (for early dismissal)
- Parent signature and contact information

*\*A call may be left on the attendance line, but this line is only checked periodically during the day. In the case of an emergency or prompt dismissal, please call the main line 303-387-4000*

Students: Students must check in AND check out at the attendance office when leaving early or arriving late (this does not include arriving back at school from off hours or open campus). **\*\*Please note, freshmen DO NOT have off-campus privileges\*\***

Parents & Students: It is the policy of Ponderosa High School, amongst all teachers and across every department, that at minute fifteen (15) of a student's late arrival that their attendance distinction changes from "tardy" (minute 1-14) to absent (minute 15+).

## **Early Dismissal: Illness**

If a student becomes ill during the school day, they must report to the health room located in the athletic office for an early dismissal. For guidelines for determining student attendance, please see the [district guidelines](#).

## **Extended Absence**

If a student is away from school for more than (3) consecutive days, other than for pre-planned, documented medical reasons, an [Attendance Adjustment Form](#) should be filled out and turned into the attendance office. For absences that are pre-planned or known in advance, please print and ask your student to fill out (in conjunction with their teachers) the [PHS Extended Absence Form](#) and turn in to their grade-level administrator or attendance office for approval and documentation.

- The DCSD Attendance Policy regarding sick students can be found [here](#).
- Colorado's Compulsory School Attendance Law can be found [here](#).

# Attend Today. Achieve Tomorrow.



**Did You Know?** Missing just 2 days of school a month means a child misses 10% of the school year.

## How Many Absences are Too Many?

**16**

Sixteen absences in a single school year — excused or unexcused — can keep your child from succeeding in school and in life. Just **16** absences can make your child fall behind and be knocked off track.

## 6 Things You Can Do to Keep Your Child In School and On Track for Success:

1. Set a regular bed time and morning routine.
2. Lay out clothes and pack backpacks the night before.
3. Find out what day school starts and make sure your child has their vaccinations before school begins.
4. Don't let your child stay home unless he or she is truly sick. Keep in mind complaints of a stomach ache or headache can be a sign of anxiety and not a reason to stay home.
5. Develop back-up plans for getting to school if something comes up. Call on a family member, a neighbor or another parent.
6. Avoid medical appointments and extended trips when school is in session.

## WARNING!



16 or more absences



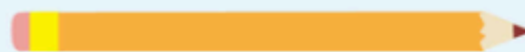
10-15 absences



9 or fewer absences



**Stay Connected, Keep Learning!**



#schooleveryday